

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 23, 2019

The Honorable K. Jane Williams
Acting Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Acting Administrator K. J. Williams,

We would like to thank you for appearing before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, and for your testimony on the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program. Our exchange during the hearing regarding the Portal North Bridge project was constructive, and we look forward to working with you to take the next steps.

After reviewing your testimony, we wanted to confirm some of the points you made and ensure that we are on the same page. Our understanding, based on your response to Congressman Malinowski's questions, is that New Jersey does not need to have issued bonds to increase its rating in the CIG program, but that you are still looking for the state to take several steps before the proposed bonds could be considered "committed" for the purpose of local funding. Specifically, you said that committed funding means, "...New Jersey Transit (NJT) has to have access to those funds today," and that as of now you believe this is not the case for the Portal Bridge. You said this is because NJT has to have board approval to issue bonds and because the funds must be available in the state transportation plan.

Having spoken with officials from New Jersey, we have been assured that these benchmarks have been met. The bond agreements were all signed in 2018, and the current state budget, approved on June 30, 2019, includes \$51.49 million in funding for the Economic Development Authority debt service repayment for the Portal North Bridge project. The NJ Transit Board, on July 17, approved the new budget and NJT's capital plan. We would ask that, as you offered during Congressman Payne's questioning, you check with your technical team to see if these most recent developments now mean that these bonds would be considered committed local funds, and that any additional requirements are clearly justified and communicated to New Jersey officials.

We are encouraged by your testimony, and hope it means that work on this project, which is vital to the economy of New Jersey and the northeast corridor, can soon begin. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Tom Malinowski
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Donald Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress